

WASHINGTON, DC – Rep. Peter DeFazio (D-Springfield) has introduced the End the Trade Deficit Act which would establish a commission to review and report on free trade agreements that have destroyed American manufacturing and shipped millions of good paying American jobs overseas. The bill would also put a moratorium on new Free Trade Agreements until the Commission has submitted a final report to the president and Congress. A similar bill sponsored by DeFazio passed the House in 2010.

DeFazio's bill forces policy leaders to rethink the wisdom of the nation's current U.S. trade policy. DeFazio believes we need a trade policy that promotes manufacturing investment in the U.S., creates a level playing field for U.S. manufacturers, improves U.S. infrastructure, and strengthens the labor pool through improved education and training programs.

"The U.S. has lost 3,718,000 manufacturing jobs since 1998, and since 2001 we have lost 42,400 factories. While we hemorrhage our manufacturing base, Congress will vote on three so-called free trade agreements that ship more jobs overseas and increase our trade deficit," DeFazio said. "We can't afford to lose any more jobs to trade agreements that jeopardize our economic future. This legislation aims to level the playing field for American manufacturing workers who have been steadily losing ground for the last three decades and strengthen our economic security."

BACKGROUND

In 1998, the Congress authorized the Trade Deficit Review Commission in the wake of a \$166 billion trade deficit. It was a watered down version of one designed in the End the Trade Deficit Act introduced by Rep. DeFazio and Senator Dorgan. Unfortunately, the Commission was deadlocked along partisan lines and no recommendations were ever enacted.

The current recent recession has not changed the underlying trend of increasing trade deficits. Despite a slight drop in 2009, the trade deficit ballooned to \$498 billion by 2010. The United States has had 35 years of consecutive annual trade deficits, totaling \$7.8 trillion.

